



H.Res. 1237 - Recognizing the historical significance of Juneteenth Independence Day, and expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that history should be regarded as a means for understanding the past and more effectively facing the challenges of the future

FLOOR SITUATION

H.Res. 1237 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Danny Davis (D-IL) on June 4, 2008. The resolution was ordered to be reported by voice vote by the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform on June 12, 2008.

H.Res. 1237 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on June 17, 2008.

SUMMARY

H.Res. 1237 resolves that the House of Representatives:

- Recognizes the historical significance of Juneteenth Independence Day to the Nation;
- Supports the continued celebration of Juneteenth Independence Day to provide an opportunity for the people of the United States to learn more about the past and to better understand the experiences that have shaped the Nation; and

H.Res. 1237 also resolves that it is the sense of the House of Representatives that history should be regarded as a means for understanding the past and more effectively facing the challenges of the future; and the celebration of the end of slavery is an important and enriching part of the history and heritage of the United States.

BACKGROUND

Juneteenth Independence Day is celebrated annually on June 19. The celebration dates back to June 19, 1865, when Major General Gordon Granger and his Union troops arrived in Galveston, Texas. Granger announced the news that the Civil War had ended and that the enslaved peoples there were thus free. News of the Emancipation Proclamation of January 1, 1863 had not reached certain areas in the Southwestern states until that year, 1865.

The celebration, also known as Freedom Day or Emancipation Day, is currently an annual holiday or holiday observance in 26 states. Since 1980, Juneteenth Independence Day has been an official state holiday in Texas.

STAFF CONTACT

For questions or further information contact Adam Hepburn at (202) 226-2302.